The Livingston County Historical Society

MESSAGES FROM MADISON STREET Vol. 1, No. 1 Sept. 1990

Dear Members:

The idea of a newsletter to keep our membership better informed has been discussed for many years. I think the time has come for this idea to become a reality. Our organization, a strong and viable group of men and women numbers over 190 members. It is important that we communicate to the membership not only through our regular meetings, but through a newsletter.

It has been a busy summer for many of our members who have participated in various activities. This issue will cover some of those activities.

President, John Perring

Liv. Co. Historical Society Membership continues to grow

Greetings'. My name is Susan Myers and I was drafted as your membership chairman last spring by John Perring. My committee has been very helpful in collecting the 1990 dues and recruiting new members. We have 20 new members for the 1990 year. I hope you will join me in welcoming them when our meetings resume.

Our total membership list numbers 192. With this notice members sho need to update their dues are being notified.

We would like to collect the remaining dues as soon as possible as we will soon be into the 1991 membership drive. If you have a question about your dues, please feel free to contact me.

Susan Myers, 844-5878

Annual Ham and Bean Luncheon

The Society's traditional Ham, Bean and Cornbread luncheon has been tentatively set for Saturday, November 10th at the First Lutheran Church.

Historical Society Members play leading roles in premiere Heritage Day Event

Heritage Days, a new event sponsored by PROUD, was held Saturday, August 4th on the courthouse square in Pontiac. The event featured demonstrations of old crafts, musical programs, food and games.

Several members of the Historical Society were involved in the event. Tom Goldasich and Laura Sellmyer were co-chairmen of the festivities. Peg Spalding researched and presented a history of the previous occupants of downtown business addresses. Susan Broerman organized a display of business artifacts in City Hall and also publicized the event. Barb Sancken also helped with the business artifacts display while sharing her ecpertise on the history of Pontiac. Bob Sear demonstrated pottery making and Hubert Boswell caned chairs while entertaining onlookers with many interesting stories of Pontiac.

Cathy Grafton displayed the quilt which is her current project. Frank Sellmyer made ice cream the old fashioned way while Lorraine Sellmyer demonstrated rug braiding and fancywork. Mary Dievendorf, Thelma Asper, John Perring and Carl Apt hosted a special open house at the Jones House. Many members of the Historical Society were among those who loaned their paintings of the Old Williams Mill for a week-long showing at the Wall Works.

Heritage Days is planned for Saturday, August 3rd, 1991. If anyone has talents or ideas to contribute, please contact us.

Submitted by Laura Sellmyer and Tom Goldasich

Busy Day at Jones House

Mary Dievendorf and Thelma Asper report that they had over 75 visitors at the Jones House during the Heritage Day festivities. Much interest was expressed in the extensive collections of light bulbs given to the Society by J.M. "Mac" Luther, and the impressive Indian Artifacts collection from the family of the late Grant McCormack.

New items added to Jones House

New items in the kitchen addition are a spice cabinet and a mammy bench. The spice cabinet was given by Helen Wolff as a memorial gift for late member and past president, Robert Arnold Schlosser.
The mammy bench, a gift from Mrs. Harold "Evelyn" Berry was brought out of storage, refinished and now occupies a prominent place in the kitchen.

Artifacts Committee Update

By Joan Bolz and Barb Cook

We have talked to Arnold Natzke regarding the cases located in the Courthouse. Mr. Natzke feels they are viewed by many people and he would like to have them remain there. He also implied he would strive to have lights installed over the cases. If the committee decides to leave the cases in the Courthouse, more interest might be generated by changing the displays in them on a regular basis

Daren Cox and Tom Goldasich have spent many hours refinishing the room in City Hall. The projected date for completion is September 1. Bob Sear has purchased a display case for the room.

We met recently with Bob Karls, City Adm., about future plans for City Hall. He informed us the City Council is exploring different Avenues. He does not anticipate any changes in the foreseeable future and advised us to continue with out plans.

J. Paul Yost House

The Liv. Co. Historical Soc. has entered into an agreement with the city of Pontiac to manage the historic Yost house. Basically, the city would be responsible for the maintenance, upkeep and repair while the Society would be responsible for making the home available for sharing and use by the public.

JP

Livingston County Museum Room

Work on the Livingston County Museum room at Pontiac City Hall has resumed with the removal of the old carpet by Tom Goldasich, Paul Trainor and Wayne Hughes. The next step is to refinish the original hardwood floors.

This will enable the Society to move in some display cases for the many artifacts that are currently housed in several locations. Other work yet to be completed includes sealing the storm windows and re-routing the new duct work for the furnace. A nearly new window air conditioner is available to use as soon as it can be installed.

Tom Goldasich

Additions to Plaque

The name of Robert Arnold Schlosser has been added to the Pearle Sutherland Plaque. The Pontiac National Bank has advanced to the highest category.

Pontiac City Hall/Fire Station passes first hurdle for National Register Nomination.

By Tom Goldasich

On Friday, June 15th, 1990, the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council met in Joliet, IL., at the historic Jacob Henry House. The meeting was held to consider four historic properties for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The Pontiac City Hall/Fire Station was the first property to be considered. The nomination forms were prepared by Tom Goldasich of Pontiac, who also gave a slide presentation to the Advisory Council at the meeting. Also in attendance was John Perring, president of the Liv. County Historical Society.

The National Register is the Federal Government's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation. Listing in the National Register assists in preserving our national heritage. In this sense, the Pontiac City Hall/Fire Station is associated with events of early Pontiac history that have made a significant contribution to the management and safety of the area.

When a property is listed in the National Register certain tax provisions may apply, such as an investment tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic buildings, and federal grants for historic preservation when funding is available

The next step in the nomination process will occur when the forms are reviewed at Wash. D.C. It is expected that the Advisory Council's recommendation will be favorably received.

News of the Wall

The completion of the east segment of the Jones House wall is scheduled to begin about Sept. 1. A gift of 3 feet of the west side of lot one by Mr. and Mrs. Junior Hobart will enable us to build the wall in line with the east side of the carriage house. Completion of the wall means that the lawn and landscaping can begin.

GOOD PROGRAMS AHEAD

Barb Jobst and Nancy Giovanini remind the members that three interesting programs will conclude our 1990 year.

September 27--Joe Jobst
"Humiston Woods"

October 25---Trudy Blakeman
"Buttons"

December 7--"Christmas at Williamsburg"
Joscelyn Johnson

Help Needed

Volunteers are needed to act as guides Sunday Afternoons at the Jones House. We need chairmen for Sept-Dec. to line up prospective guides.

Ingeborg Olson
844-6868

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It is hoped that you have found the Historical Society Newsletter interesting and informative. Do you like heartwarming surprises??????
Come to the September 27th meeting of the Society and hear the treasurer's report.

RCP